DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 028 777 JC 690 131

By-Jones, Emmett L.

Results of a Study to Aid in Defining "Success" for Students at the Southeast Branch of the Chicago City College.

Pub Date Feb 69
Note-15p.
EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$0.85
Descriptors-*Achievement, *Dropouts, *Junior Colleges, *Objectives, *Student Characteristics
Identifiers-Chicago

This study examined the responses of 2,211 students constituting about 75% of the enrollment of an urban junior college in an effort to identify elements of student attrition. The author suggested that there may be criteria of success other than graduation. The purpose of the study was to aid in a definition of "success" as perceived by this sample of subjects. Findings: (1) more students in business, political science, health, and occupational-technical areas tended to plan to graduate than students in science, arts, and humanities, (2) more students seeking professional and graduate degree planned to transfer than to graduate with an A.A. degree, (3) 32% of the students planned to graduate, 30% were not sure if they planned to graduate, 40% were part-time, etc. Conclusions include the idea that, in addition to graduation, "success" in junior college can mean an opportunity to (1) develop interests and aptitudes, (2) formulate definite goals and objectives, (3) achieve passing grades after previous failure, and/or (4) complete part of collegiate training at low cost. It was recommended that educators differentiate between education and training and question their current curricular decisions about what knowledge future college-educated citizens should possess. It was also stated that insistence on the same degree requirements for all students might lead to frustration, academic failure, and finally to college drop-out. (RM)

ED028777

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

RESULTS OF A STUDY TO AID IN DEFINING "SUCCESS" FOR STUDENTS AT THE SOUTHEAST BRANCH OF THE CHICAGO CITY COLLEGE

By

EMMETT L. JONES

DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

February 1969

JC 690 131

UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
LOS ANGELES

APR 14 1969

CLEARINGHOUSE FOR
JUNIOR COLLEGE
INFORMATION

A. INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM

During the fall of 1960, there were 230 full-time new freshmen registered at the Southeast Campus of the Chicago City College. Out of the 230 students, only 26 or 11.3 percent graduated before June, 1964. Another study shows that 502 full-time new freshmen students registered during the fall of 1965; and by June, 1967, 304 of these students, or 60.5 percent, were no longer in attendance.

An attitudinal survey made of first semester freshmen students at Southeast, during the month of October, 1968, indicated that 68 percent of the students who responded planned to return to the Campus for the next academic year (1969-70). Inasmuch as past records do not show as high a retention rate as indicated by the study, and in that the number of graduates is small compared to the total enrollment of the College, one wonders, then, why the students drop out.

B. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The community junior college is increasingly becoming a multi-purpose institution serving, among other functions, the needs of (1) students attending for only one course or a few courses, (2) students transferring to senior institutions without graduating, (3) students experimenting with college before investing in a senior institution, and (4) students raising grade point averages after having previously attended four-year institutions.

It is generally assumed that graduation is the sole criterion for a successful college student. However, there are indications that "success" for a junior college student may mean something other than, or in addition to, graduation. The primary purpose of this study, then, is to aid in a definition of "success" for the students enrolled at the Southeast Branch of the Chicago City College for the fall semester of the 1968-69 academic year.

C. THE INSTRUMENT AND METHODOLOGY

The instrument consisted of eight separate items with multiple choices. In addition, one extra item was added to provide those students indicating that they did not plan to graduate from Southeast an opportunity to respond to the following statement: I would remain to graduate from Southeast if the college would do the following.

The questionnaire was administered by the teaching faculty, to 2211 students, during the second and third weeks of November, 1968. The registration figure for the fall semester was 3564 students, and there were 451 withdrawals during the semester. Therefore, the number of students reached constituted about 75 percent of the total student body.

D. RESULTS OF THE STUDY: grand totals

1. VOCATIONAL CHOICE - the vocational choices indicated by the 2211 students responding to the questionnaire are as follows:

		NUMBER OF STUDENTS	PERCENT
(a)	Educational fields (teaching).....	540	24.4
(b)	Social science and religious fields.....	130	5.8
(c)	Business and political fields.....	624	28.2
(d)	Scientific fields.....	208	9.4
(e)	Health fields.....	162	7.3
(f)	Arts and humanities.....	106	4.7
(g)	Engineering.....	266	12.0
(h)	Occupational-vocational.....	69	3.1
(i)	Other.....	78	3.5
(j)	No response.....	28	1.2

This study supports one conducted by the American Council on Education's Office of Research in which a total of 301,448 entering freshmen at 435 colleges and universities participated. When asked to name their proposed major field of study, business, education and engineering were the most popular, respectively. However, this study goes a few steps beyond the one cited in that addition to entering freshmen, second, third and fourth semester students are included, but with the same findings.

2. EDUCATIONAL GOAL - the ultimate educational goals indicated by the total student body responding are as follows:

		NUMBER OF STUDENTS	PERCENT
(a)	Voc. tech. training less than 2 years...	40	1.8
(b)	Certif. in a 2 yr. tech-occup program...	189	8.5
(c)	A.A. degree.....	171	7.7
(d)	Bachelor's degree.....	968	43.7
(e)	M.A.,M.B.A., etc.....	447	20.2
(f)	Ph.D. or Ed.D.....	173	7.8
(g)	M.D. or D.D.S.....	48	2.1
(h)	Bach. of Law.....	59	2.6
(i)	Other.....	43	1.9
(j)	No response.....	73	3.3

About 76 percent of the respondents are interested in, at least, a baccalaurate degree. Only 10 percent of the students indicated a desire to achieve less than an A.A. degree.

3. SEMESTERS IN ATTENDANCE AT SOUTHEAST - the 2211 students, reached through the questionnaire, indicated the number of semesters, including the present one, in attendance at Southeast as shown below:

		NUMBER OF STUDENTS	PERCENT
(a)	One semester.....	1007	45.5
(b)	Two semesters.....	286	12.9
(c)	Three semesters.....	514	23.2
(d)	Four or more semesters.....	354	16.0
(e)	No response.....	50	2.2

Approximately 46 percent of the 2211 students surveyed are first semester freshmen. This leads to a minimum figure of about 59 percent falling within the category of freshmen. However, about 40 percent have been in attendance three or more semesters. Even though three or more semesters in attendance is not always equivalent to sophomore classification, nevertheless, for comparative reasons, results of other studies will be cited below.

The 1967 Directory American Association of Junior Colleges shows that out of a total head count of 63,423 students enrolled in public junior colleges of Illinois, 62.2 percent were classified as freshmen, 21.5 percent as sophomores, and 15.7 percent were unclassified. These figures are typical for all public junior colleges throughout the nation.

The Anderson Report of Selected Data And Characteristics Of The Illinois Public Junior Colleges For 1967-68 gives a total head count of 83,804 students, with 63.7 percent classified as freshmen, 21.6 percent as sophomores, and 14.5 percent unclassified.

4. SEMESTER HOURS CURRENTLY CARRIED

		NUMBER OF STUDENTS	PERCENT
(a)	3 - 6 semester hours.....	501	22.6
(b)	7 -10 semester hours.....	472	21.3
(c)	11 -14 semester hours.....	819	36.9
(d)	15 -18 semester hours.....	399	18.0
(e)	No response.....	21	0.9

Of the 2211 students responding to the questionnaire, about 55 percent indicated that they are full-time students, with 44 percent carrying less than eleven semester hours. This is just the opposite of the figures given in the Anderson Report. That report gives 45 percent for full-time students and 55 percent for part-time students enrolled in the junior colleges of Illinois.

5. COLLEGES ATTENDED BEFORE COMING TO SOUTHEAST

		NUMBER OF STUDENTS	PERCENT
(a)	None	1597	72.2
(b)	Another branch of C.C.C.	209	9.4
(c)	4-year college	302	13.6
(d)	Other	103	4.6

Some 18 percent of the responding students had attended some other college before entering the Chicago City College. An additional 10 percent transferred from another branch of the C.C.C. before entering Southeast.

6. PLANS FOR GRADUATING FROM SOUTHEAST - of the total student body responding to the question, "Do you plan to graduate from Southeast?" the results are as follows:

		NUMBER OF STUDENTS	PERCENT
(a)	Yes	814	36.8
(b)	Not sure	667	30.1
(c)	No	730	33.[illegible]

Roughly, the present student body may be divided equally into those students planning to graduate, those who are not sure, and those who do not plan to graduate from Southeast. The proportion of graduates from Southeast for the year 1966-67, as compared to the total student population was 2.2 percent. This is much lower than the state-wide average for the same year.

The Anderson Report shows that the total head count for the Illinois public junior colleges during 1966 was 71,108 students, and that there were 3,956 graduates that year. The proportion of graduates to the total enrollment for that year was 5½ percent.

7. PRINCIPAL PURPOSE FOR ATTENDING SOUTHEAST

		NUMBER OF STUDENTS	PERCENT
(a)	To prepare for transfer to a four year college.....	835	37.7
(b)	To graduate and transfer to a four year college.....	627	28.3
(c)	To graduate but no plans for transfer.....	92	4.1
(d)	To experiment with college before making future plans.....	179	8.0
(e)	To prepare for direct entry into employment.....	124	5.6
(f)	To study specific courses without plans for graduation.....	112	5.0
(g)	To raise grade point average after previous enrollment at a 4 yr. college	120	5.4
(h)	To avoid the draft.....	23	1.0
(i)	To satisfy parents.....	8	0.3
(j)	Other.....	78	3.5
(k)	No response.....	13	0.5

The single factor accounting for the largest number of students (about 38 percent) is that of preparing for transfer to a four year college. Two-thirds of the students indicated that they are bound for a four year institution. About equal numbers (5%) indicated they are here principally (1) to prepare for direct entry into employment, (2) to study specific courses without plans for graduation, and (3) to raise grade point averages after previous enrollment at a four year college.

The Anderson Report stated that approximately 67 percent of all Illinois junior college students were enrolled in baccalurate curricula, as compared to 66 percent indicated by the above responses. But if the 5.4 percent obtained from students raising grade point averages after previous enrollment at a four year college were added, Southeast's figures would go up to 71 percent.

8. REASON FOR NOT GRADUATING FROM SOUTHEAST - the reasons given by the 730 students who indicated that they do not plan to graduate from Southeast are as follows:

		NUMBER OF STUDENTS	PERCENT
(a)	Initial transfer to 4 year college.....	412	56.4
(b)	Return to 4 year college.....	125	17.1
(c)	Transfer to another branch of C.C.C.....	23	3.1
(d)	Disenchanted with college.....	13	1.7
(e)	Courses irrelevant.....	22	3.0
(f)	Personal (marriage, financial, health, etc.).....	16	2.1
(g)	Grades too low.....	2	0.2
(h)	Employment.....	21	2.8
(i)	Disenchanted with courses or schedules.....	19	2.6
*(j)	Other.....	55	7.5
(k)	No response.....	22	3.0

*MOSTLY ADVANCED PLACEMENT STUDENTS, AND THOSE WITH DEGREES

About three-fourths of the 730 students stating that they do not plan to graduate from Southeast indicated that they will transfer to a four year college, either initially or as returnees. Significantly, only about 7 percent of these 730 students indicated that they were disenchanted with the college or courses, or found the courses to be irrelevant.

E. RESULTS OF THE STUDY: total student population compared (1) with those who plan to graduate from Southeast, (2) with those not sure of graduating, and (3) with those who do not plan to graduate.

1. VOCATIONAL CHOICE

	Plan to Graduate	Not Sure	Do Not Plan To Graduate	Total Population
(a) Bus and Polit..	.36.6%....	35.8%...	27.5%.....	28.2%
(b) Ed'l fields....	.31.4.....	32.6....	35.9.....	24.4
(c) Engineering....	.33.7.....	31.5....	34.6.....	12.0
(d) Scientific.....	29.1.....	31.6....	39.1.....	9.4
(e) Health.....	43.7.....	30.2....	26.0.....	7.3
(f) Social Sci.....	32.7.....	33.9....	33.3.....	5.8
(g) Arts and Hum...	22.7.....	33.7....	43.4.....	4.7
(h) Occup-Vocat....	45.0.....	34.0....	20.8.....	3.1
*(i) Other.....	14.2.....	20.9....	64.7.....	3.5
(j) No response....	32.4.....	62.1....	5.4.....	1.2

*Advanced placements, graduates, etc.

As seen above, the business and political science students constitute 28.2 percent of the total student population reached through the questionnaire. Of these students, 36.6 percent plan to graduate, 35.8 percent were not sure, and 27.5 percent did not plan to graduate.

The vocational choices seem to have some effect upon the students' plans for graduation from Southeast. The students in business and political science, health, and occupational-vocational areas tended more, according to their response, to plan to graduate from Southeast than do the students in scientific fields, arts, and humanities.

2. ULTIMATE EDUCATIONAL GOAL

	Plan to Graduate	Not Sure	Do not Plan to Graduate	Total Po;ulation
(a) Voc-tech less 2 yrs	10.9%..	52.7%...	36.3%....	1.8%
(b) Certificate	36.5...	47.4....	15.9.....	8.5
(c) A.A. degree	62.7...	30.0....	7.1.....	7.7
(d) Bachelor's	34.3...	34.1....	31.5.....	43.7
(e) Master's	30.6...	25.0....	44.2.....	20.2
(f) Doctorate	23.0...	25.2....	51.7.....	7.8
(g) M.D.	30.1...	20.6....	49.2.....	2.1
(h) Bach. of Law	29.4...	25.6....	44.8.....	2.6
(i) Other	7.0...	14.0....	78.9.....	1.9
(j) No response	19.6...	74.5....	5.8.....	3.3

The only significant finding seen here is that, proportionally, more of the students seeking professional and graduate degrees indicated that they did not plan to graduate from Southeast.

3. SEMESTERS IN ATTENDANCE AT SOUTHEAST

	Plan to Graduate	Not Sure	Do not plan to Graduate	Total Population
(a) One semester.....	26.9%....	37.4%..	35.5%....	45.5%
(b) Two semesters.....	32.3.....	32.3...	35.2.....	12.9
(c) Three semesters.....	39.5.....	28.9...	31.5.....	23.2
(d) Four or more semesters	45.1.....	28.5...	26.3.....	16.0
(e) No response.....	25.3.....	32.8...	41.7.....	2.2

As one might expect, proportionally, more of the first semester students were unsure of their graduation plans, and more of the third and fourth semester students plan to graduate from Southeast.

4. SEMESTER HOURS CURRENTLY CARRIED

	Plan to Graduate	Not Sure	Do not plan to Graduate	Total Population
(a) 3-6 semester hrs....	29.1%....	38.2%...	32.5%....	22.6%
(b) 7-10 semester hrs...	29.6.....	38.3....	31.9.....	21.3
(c) 11-14 semester hrs..	34.7.....	31.5....	33.6.....	36.9
(d) 15-18 semester hrs..	41.2.....	25.8....	32.9.....	18.0
(e) No response.....	11.5.....	7.6....	80.7.....	0.9

The full time students indicated that they plan to graduate from Southeast in greater proportions than the part-time students.

5. COLLEGES ATTENDED BEFORE COMING TO SOUTHEAST

	Plan to Graduate	Not Sure	Do not plan to Graduate	Total Population
(a) None.....	34.1%.....	34.9%....	30.9%....	72.2%
(b) Another branch.....	43.7.....	34.7.....	21.5.....	9.4
(c) Four year College...	21.4.....	24.3.....	54.2.....	13.6
(d) Other.....	35.5.....	31.8.....	32.6.....	4.6

Compared to the total student population, the students who previously attended a four year college indicated in greater proportions that they did not plan to graduate from Southeast. Presumably, they plan to return to their former institutions. On the other hand, those who attended another branch of the Chicago City College tended more to plan to graduate from Southeast.

6. PRINCIPAL PURPOSE FOR ATTENDING SOUTHEAST

	Plan to Graduate	Not Sure	Do not plan to Graduate	Total Population
(a) To prepare for transfer to 4 yr. college	8.3%	37.1%	54.4%	37.7%
(b) To graduate and transfer to 4 yr. college	81.3	16.7	1.8	28.3
(c) To graduate but no plans for transfer	63.8	34.4	1.6	4.1
(d) To experiment with college before making future plans	18.6	63.4	17.8	8.0
(e) To prepare for direct entry into employment	44.2	43.0	12.7	5.6
(f) To study specific courses without plans for graduation	3.7	48.1	48.1	5.0
(g) To raise GPA after previous enrollment at 4 yr. college	11.0	21.4	67.4	5.4
(h) To avoid the draft	9.6	61.2	29.0	1.0
(i) To satisfy parents	22,2	55,5	22,2	0.3
(j) Others	21.2	12.5	66.3	3.5
(k) No response	18.7	31.2	50.0	0.5

About 17 percent of the students who come to Southeast principally to graduate and transfer to a four year college are now, according to their responses, unsure of graduation plans. And 34 percent of the students who indicated that they come principally to graduate but no plans for transfer were also unsure of graduation plans.

Two-thirds of the students who came to Southeast principally to experiment with college before making future plans indicated that they were unsure about graduating. The others are divided about equally between those who do and those who do not plan to graduate from Southeast.

Only 13 percent of the students who came principally to prepare for direct entry into employment do not plan to graduate from Southeast; whereas 44 percent of them plan to graduate, and 43 percent are unsure.

Sixty-seven percent of those students who came principally to raise grade point averages presumably plan to return to their previous four year colleges. Eleven percent of them indicated that they plan to graduate from Southeast, and 21 percent were unsure.

F. RESULTS OF THE STUDY: Total student population compared with the three most popular vocational choices in response to the item. My principal purpose for attending Southeast.

	Bus.& Polit.	Ed'l. Field	Engr.	*Total Pop.
(a) To prepare for transfer....	29.9%	45.1%	44.7%	37.7
(b) To graduate and transfer to a 4 yr. college.....	28.5	34.2	31.5	28.3
(c) To graduate but no plan for transfer to 4 yr. coll.....	6.7	0	3.3	4.1
(d) To experiment with college before making future plans.	10.2	6.6	4.8	8.0
(e) To prepare for direct entry into employment.....	7.8	0.9	3.0	5.6
(f) To study specific courses without plans for graduation.....	6.0	2.4	3.0	5.0
(g) To raise GPA after previous enrollment at a 4 yr. coll.	5.6	6.2	4.1	5.4
(h) To avoid draft.....	0.9	0.9	1.1	1.0
(i) To satisfy parents.....	0.3	0.1	0.3	0.3
(j) Other.....	3.5	2.2	2.6	3.5
(k) No response.....	0.1	0.9	1.1	0.5
	99.5	99.5	99.5	99.4

*Total population includes the total 2,211 students reached, whereas, Business and Political fields include 624 students, Educational fields include 540 students, and the Engineering fields include 266 students.

As seen above, the students interested in educational fields indicate that they came to Southeast less for reasons of (1) graduating but not transferring; (2) preparing for direct entry into employment, and (3) studying specific courses without plans for graduation than do students in other curricula. But they came to (1) raise grade point averages, (2) graduate and transfer without graduating with greater frequency than others.

The engineering students came to Southeast less for experimental purposes but more for transfer than students in other curricula.

G. ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

At a Higher Education Seminar held at the University of Chicago on February 10, 1969, Dr. Rodney Berg, President of the College of Du Page at Naperville, Illinois, stated that the community colleges are serving primarily "deficient students." He defined deficient students as students deficient in goals, money, ability, grades, etc.

This study indicates that Southeast College is serving a large proportion of deficient students.

1. Thirty percent of the students indicated that they are not sure whether or not they plan to graduate from Southeast.

2. Eight percent of the students indicated that they are attending Southeast for the principal purpose of experimenting with college before making future plans.

3. Seventeen percent of the students who indicated that they came to Southeast principally to graduate and transfer, also indicated that they were unsure regarding plans to graduate.

4. Twenty-eight percent of the students indicated that they had attended another college before coming to Southeast.

5. Five percent of the students indicated that they came to Southeast principally to raise grade point averages after previous enrollment at a four year college.

6. Eighteen percent of the students indicated that their ultimate educational goal was the A.A. degree or less, but only 3 percent of the total student population indicated an interest in occupational-vocational curricula.

7. Thirty-two percent of the students indicated that they came to Southeast principally to graduate (28 percent to transfer later to four year colleges and 4 percent with no plans for transfer), but the proportion of graduates to the total student population for the year 1966-67 was only 2.2 percent. During the 1967-68 school term, the graduates constituted 3.1 percent of the total student population-an increase of less than one percent.

8. Forty-four percent of the students are carrying less than eleven semester hours, and are therefore classified as part-timers.

One can only conclude at the present time that "success" for the students at the Southeast Campus of the Chicago City College means something other than, or in addition to, graduation. For some students "success" is an opportunity to develop interests and aptitudes; for others, it is an opportunity to formulate definite goals and objectives; and still for others, it is an opportunity to achieve passing grades where they once failed. But, for many of the students, "success" is the opportunity to complete part of their collegiate training at low cost.

H. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Inasmuch as the Southeast Campus of the Chicago City College is one of the major technological centers within the system and in that only 3 percent of the students indicated occupational-vocational curricula as their vocational choices, it is recommended that a study be launched to determine the extent to which technical-occupational-vocational classes are being filled at each campus. If the majority of the classes are being carried with only the minimum number of students enrolled, it may become desirable to offer all such courses from one centrally located campus, so as to maximize the use of the physical and financial resources.

   An alternative to the above recommendation would be to have each campus divert more of the students, who are not academically qualified to successfully pursue a baccalaurate program, into occupational-vocational programs for which they have aptitudes and interests. This of course, would necessitate the hiring of many more qualified persons in the areas of testing, guidance and counseling.

2. Inasmuch as two-thirds of the students indicated that they were bound for a four year institution, follow-up studies are recommended to determine if the students leaving Southeast, with and without the A.A. degree, continue to pursue their stated educational goals.

3. Since it is not known if students withdraw or drop-out because of employment opportunities, scholastic failure, disenchantment with courses, schedules, instructors, facilities, activities,

etc., it is recommended that an instrument be constructed to determine detailed reasons for withdrawals and drop-outs.

In conclusion the following comments are offered:

At a Higher Education Seminar held at the University of Chicago on February 17, 1969, Dr. Jacob W. Getzels, Professor of Education at the University, reporting on studies made at the School of the Art Institute stated that many of the art students were dropouts from four year institutions because of their aversions to some of the required courses. Many students having special aptitudes and interest for an art vocation refused to expend their time and energy on courses, which appeared uninteresting and irrelevant to them, such as physics, chemistry, physical science, mathematics, etc.

Perhaps the time has come for a re-definition of the goals of higher education in the Chicago City College. Especially, should an effort be made to differentiate between education and training, in that some students come for the former and others for the latter. As educators, we sometime feel that it is strictly within our domain to decide what knowledge future college-educated citizens must possess. But it is highly possible that a student may develop into a first-rate artist or a draftsman, or a laboratory technician without possessing the ability to communicate in writing like a Pulitzer Prize winner; nor must he necessarily be able to delve into abstractions as Albert Einstein might. It just might be that we are asking too much to insist that a potential engineering technician demonstrate a knowledge of molecular biology or familiarity with the works of Mozart. Such insistence may lead to frustrations, disenchantments, academic failures, and finally to college-drop-outs.

References Cited

1. Anderson, E.F., and J.S. Spencer. 1968
Report of Selected Data and Characteristics
Illinois Public Junior College 1967-68.
Illinois Junior College Board. Springfield,
Illinois.

2. 1967 Junior College Directory.
Period covering September 1967-August 1966
and fall enrollments for 1966

Published by the American Association of
Junior Colleges with assistance from the
Association of Higher Education and the
Research Division, National Education
Association

American Association of Junior Colleges
1315 Sixteenth Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

William A. Harper, Editor

3. Higher Education and National Affairs.
December 23, 1968.
Vol. XVII; Washington, D.C.